

REMARKS

In the Official Action mailed on **5 October 2005**, the examiner reviewed claims 1-11 and 13-25. Claims 1-5, 13-14, 23, and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bly et al. (U.S. Pub 2002/0077944, hereinafter “Bly.”), in view of Guerindon et al. (USPN 5,193,065 hereinafter “Guerindon”). Claims 6-11, 15, and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bly et al., in view of Guerindon, and further in view of Harris (USPub 2002/0059204, hereinafter “Harris”).

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Independent claims 1, 14, and 23 were rejected as being unpatentable over Bly in view of Guerindon. Independent claims 15, and 22 were rejected as being unpatentable over Bly in view of Guerindon and further in view of Harris.

Applicant respectfully points out that Bly teaches a system for the disposition of assets (see Bly, title, see Bly, abstract, and see Bly, paragraph [0017]). Bly focuses on the dealer’s perspective. In particular, Bly focuses on dealers who rent out industrial equipment and fleets (see Bly, paragraph [0011], and see Bly, paragraph [0013]). Using Bly, dealers can group their products together such that if a customer requires a seldom used item, a dealer can procure the item from a second dealer and act as a middle-man in the transaction between the customer and the second dealer (see Bly, paragraph [0013], and see Bly, paragraph [0040]). For example, using Bly a self-move rental truck dealer can rent to more customers by having access to not only his/her own rental truck fleet, but also the rental truck fleet of his/her neighboring self-move rental truck dealers.

In contrast, the present invention focuses on the customer perspective (see page 5, lines 4-7 of the instant application). The present invention teaches a system for a customer to obtain goods and/or services within organizational procurement controls (see page 5, lines 4-7, see page 6, lines 6-9, and see page 9,

lines 20-25 of the instant application). Using the present invention, a customer can identify whether a central procurement system can offer the required good and/or service (see page 5, lines 9-14 of the instant application). If not, the present invention can identify the best external provider of the good/and or service without any additional effort by the customer (see page 6, lines 1-9 of the instant application).

For example, a customer can use the present invention to identify the best supplier of staplers. After placing an order for staplers, the customer can then search for a pest control service that is within the organizations price-limit.

The present invention is advantageous because a customer can turn to one resource to search for a good and/or service. Using one resource minimizes the time it takes for the customer to perform the search because only one search is needed and the customer only needs to become familiar with a single user interface.

Furthermore, an organization can ensure that all purchases of goods and/or services meet the organization's procurement controls by applying the rules automatically for the customer. Moreover, the organization can set different rules for different users. Additionally, suppliers can identify organizations and give the best price for a good and/or service without a customer needing to remember whether a special relationship exists between the customer's organization and a supplier (see page 9, lines 9-11 of the instant application).

Applicant respectfully points out that Guerindon teaches a system for maintaining the supply chain in a manufacturing environment in an effort to minimize excess resource storage costs and to minimize assembly downtime (see Guerindon, col. 3, lines 29-31, see Guerindon, col. 10, lines 12-27, and see Guerindon, col. 11, lines 34-38). If a manufacturing station has used all of an available resource, Guerindon searches local storage for more of the resource (see Guerindon, col. 7, lines 33-36). If the resource is not found, Guerindon searches global and remote storage for the resource (see Guerindon, col. 7, lines 46-54, and

see Guerindon, col. 8, lines 52-56). If the resource still can not be found, then the global control means produces a “Pull” signal (see Guerindon, col. 8, lines 60-63). The Pull signal results in modification of the material schedule to advance the next shipment of the resource (see Guerindon, col. 9, lines 5-14). Note that Guerindon uses the term global and remote to refer to external to a local manufacturing station, but within an organization (see Guerindon, col. 8, lines 27-34, see Guerindon, col. 7, lines 16-19, and see Guerindon, col. 8, lines 45-50). The terms remote and global do not mean external to an organization.

In contrast, the present invention uses the term “remote” to refer to external entities outside of an organization (see page 6, lines 6-9, see page 7, lines 21-23, and see page 9, lines 19-25 of the instant application). Thus the present invention is not limited to searching within an organization, but also can perform searches outside of the organization.

Accordingly, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 14-15, and 22-23 to clarify that the present invention provides a system for searching locally and remotely for a good and/or service within organizational procurement controls for a given procurement request. These amendments find support on page 5, lines 4-14, page 6, lines 1-9, page 7, lines 21-23, page 9, lines 9-11, and page 9 lines 19-25 of the instant application.

Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 14-15, and 22-23 as presently amended are in condition for allowance. Applicant also submits that claims 2-11 and 13, which depend upon claim 1, claims 16-21, which depend upon claim 15, and claims 24-25, which depend upon claim 23, are for the same reasons in condition for allowance and for reasons of the unique combinations recited in such claims.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the present application is presently in form for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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